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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Magnoliopsida, Gamopetalae, Gentianales, Asclepiadaceae, *Heterostemma deccanense* (Talb.) Swarup & Mangaly: Distribution, extension and geographic distribution map

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Heterostemma deccanense belongs to the family Asclepiadaceae, order Gentianales, subclass Gamopetalae, Class Magnoliopsida (Dicotyledonae) is a wiry climber species, endemic to Tropical moist mixed deciduous forests of Peninsular India (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Heterostemma deccanense* plant.

The species was first described as *Oianthus deccanensis* by Talbot based on the specimens collected by Krishna from West Pune (Northern Western Ghats) of Maharashtra state of India in 1887. After the type collections the species has not been collected from type locality and elsewhere. Hence, Nayar and Sastry (1987) included it in Red Data Book of Indian Plants, under endangered and possibly extinct category.

Swarupanandan et al. (1989), while studying generic circumscription of *Heterostemma*, *Oianthus deccanensis* is included in the genus *Heterostemma***.** Sasidharan and Swarupnandan (1994) reported it as a rediscovered species from tropical moist deciduous forests of Peechi in Thrissur district of Kerala (Southern Western Ghats), where they located very few individuals. This location is found at about 940 km from the type locality towards south.

Of late, Reddy et al. (2001) located this taxon in the tropical moist deciduous forests of the Eastern Ghats of Northern Andhra Pradesh (East Godavari district, Maredumilli: Geo. coordinates: Latitude 17°39'54" N, Longitude 81°40'10" E altitude 850 m); Khammam district, Sukumamidi: Geo. coordinates, Latitude 17°46'26" N, Longitude 81°36'32" E, altitude 600 m). From the previous reports, this record shows extension of the distribution of *Heterostemma deccanense* to about 850 km from West Pune and about 970 km from Peechi towards east.

It is of considerable phytogeographic interest in context of its distribution pattern, since all the reported sites relatively far to each other (Figure 2). Further intensive studies and a taxonomic revision of the genus *Heterostemma* is required to better define the distribution.

Heterostemma deccanense is also having ethnobiological significance (Reddy et al., 2006), used by Kondareddis tribe of Andhra Pradesh in kidney troubles (100g of root powder mixed with wheat flour (ratio: 1:5), roasted and taken as bread) and stomachache (root paste made into pills like a pigeon pea and taken daily twice to till cure).

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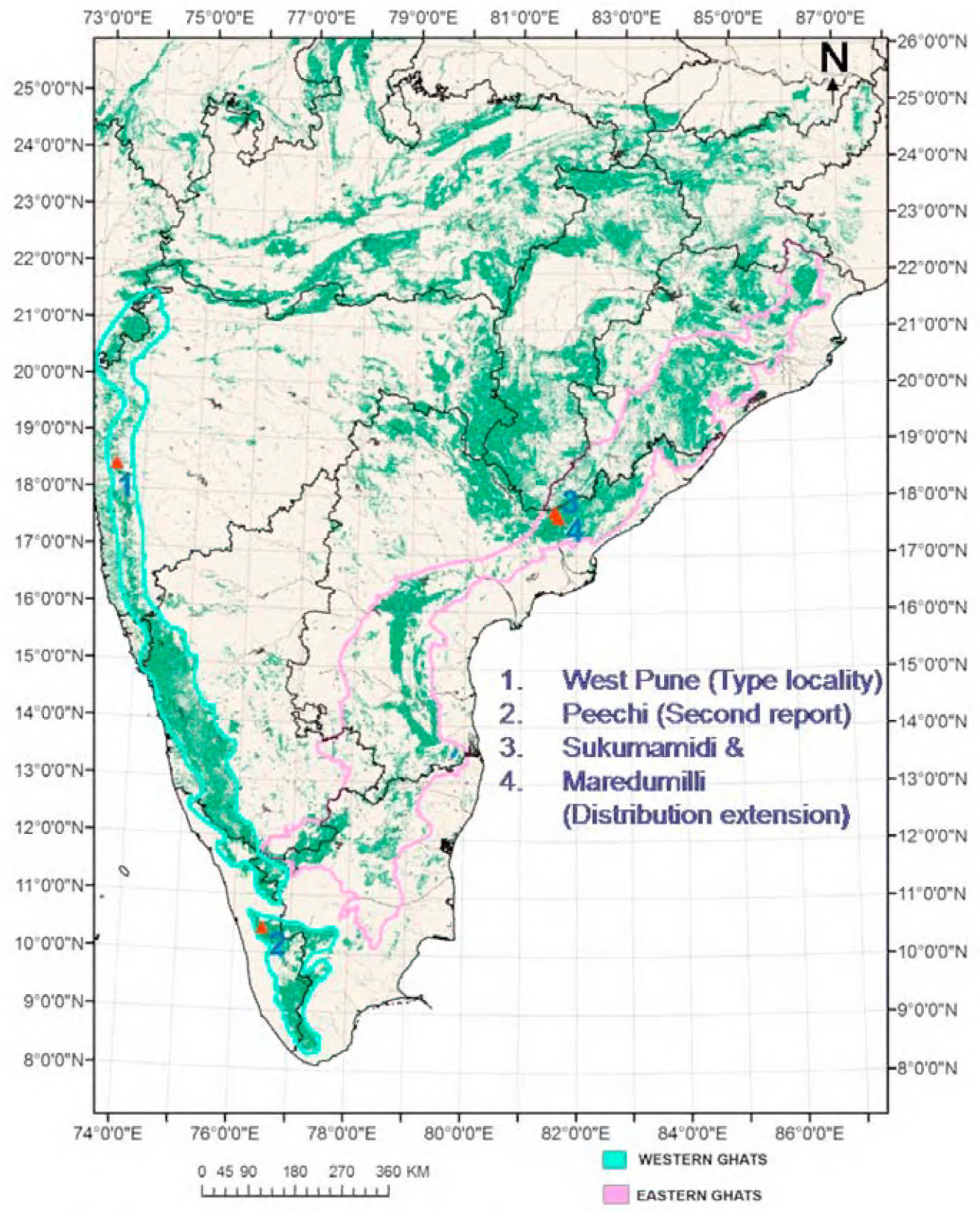

Figure 2. Distribution of *Heterostemma deccanense* in Peninsular India.

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